

**FY 2016 Water Quality Standards 205J Work Plan
Grant Amendment Application C6-00J70301
Period of performance: July 1, 2013 – June 30, 2015
Amendment 2 extended to June 30, 2016**

Summary of Project: In Alaska, 205(j) grant funds are used by the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) to make the state's regulations and guidelines for the water quality standards (WQS) understandable, reasonable, scientifically defensible, and accepted by the public and private sectors as being protective of designated uses. This grant will be used to address the remaining issues associated with the previously adopted regulations, development of antidegradation implementation regulations, and other WQS issues identified as high priority for the 2015-2017 Triennial Review. DEC has commenced work on updates to the human health criteria (fish consumption) and will continue educating stakeholders, identifying sources of data, and developing potential policy options. DEC will continue work on site specific criteria/reclassification proposals as they are received, and address other projects involving WQS revisions and guidance development.

I. Background of Project:

Recipient is requesting \$100,000 from EPA. Recipient will be providing \$0 as match to this project.

Proposed Budget for Project Period

Total project cost:	\$ 100,000
Federal funds:	\$ 100,000
Non-federal match:	\$ 0

II. Key Project Objectives:

1. To ensure that Alaska's regulations and guidelines for the water quality standards are understandable, reasonable, scientifically defensible, and accepted by the public and industry as being protective of designated uses.
2. To develop priorities for WQS revisions/additions based on input across all Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) programs and stakeholders so that the standards are appropriate to Alaska's environment and people.
3. To comply with the Clean Water Act (CWA) section 303(c)(1) requiring states to "hold public hearings for the purpose of reviewing applicable water quality standards and, as appropriate, modifying, and adopting standards."

III. Work Plan Components:

1. Prepare, plan, and implement DEC's highest priority WQS topics. Provide training and technical assistance to DEC staff on WQS.

Work Plan Component #1: Prepare, plan, and implement DEC's highest priority WQS topics as determined by the Triennial Review process and internal project decisions. Provide training and technical assistance to DEC staff on WQS.

Estimated Work Years*:	0.50 FTE	Program Coordinator	\$59,949
	0.04 FTE	Project Manager	\$ 6,943

Timeline: 07/01/15 – 06/30/16

*** Staffing Assumptions:**

The work in this component will be split between the Water Quality Standards, Assessment and Restoration Program Manager (hereinafter "Project Manager") and the Project Coordinator. The project manager will utilize 4% of their time to direct project coordinator and conduct grant administration. The project

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coordinator will implement the tasks and conduct subcontract administration of project elements. Additional staff time will be funded through the Performance Partnership Grant (PPG).

Task 1: The project coordinator will work with EPA on resolving issues associated with regulation packages previously submitted to EPA, responding to issues raised by DEC management and answering technical information requests on such issues as mixing zones residues, and natural conditions. The project coordinator and department will work with EPA to attempt to develop tasks in accordance with CWA requirements in a clear and concise manner. Participate in consultations on Endangered Species Act (ESA) and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH) when appropriate.

DUE: June 30, 2016

Task 2: For high priority WQS issues identified in the 2015-2017 Triennial Review process, the coordinator will conduct background research and analysis of regulatory options, review scientific literature, and draft recommended regulatory strategy and similar tasks, as necessary. The coordinator will provide WQS implementation assistance to other agencies and the public.

DUE: June 30, 2016

Task 3: The project coordinator will work with EPA in developing technical and policy options for revising Alaska's human health criteria. This task may include holding an educational workshop, forming a technical workgroup to address key technical issues, and conducting outreach to stakeholder groups.

DUE: June 30, 2016

Task 4: The project coordinator will work with EPA on requests for, site specific criteria and/or reclassification of waterbody uses for adoption in Alaska Water Quality Standards. The project coordinator will coordinate department permitting staff, EPA Region 10, and participation from other agencies, as needed, in developing potential proposals and reviewing supporting data and information. The department will work early with EPA to attempt to develop tasks in accordance with CWA requirements and participate in consultations on ESA and EFH as appropriate.

DUE: June 30, 2016

Task 5: DEC will work closely with EPA Region 10 staff to complete development of implementation regulations for the WQS antidegradation policy. EPA Region 10 staff will continue to be invited as a key technical expert and review and provide comments on draft regulations in a timely manner.

IV. Joint Evaluation of Performance

The grantee agrees to submit a bi-annual performance report. This report will be incorporated into the Performance Partnership Report. The report will describe progress on completion of work plan commitments, provide a discussion of the work performed for all work plan components, and include a discussion of any existing or potential problem areas which could affect project completion and what measures will be taken to address or correct the identified problem. If the EPA Project Officer, after reviewing the report, finds that the recipient has

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not made sufficient progress under the work plan, EPA and the recipient will negotiate a resolution that addresses the issues. Ultimately, most of these projects involve regulation revisions that are submitted to EPA for approval under CWA.

V. Quality Assurance

No environmental data will be collected under this grant.

VI. Roles and Responsibilities of EPA in Carrying out the Work Plan Commitments

EPA will be expected to provide technical assistance and consultation during options analysis and drafting of proposed revisions to the Alaska WQS. EPA will also be asked to submit timely comments during the public notice period. Ultimately, most of the grant projects will result in new or revised regulations that are submitted to EPA for approval under CWA within the required 60-day review period.